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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
INFORMATION REPORT

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COUNTRY China

SUBJECT Miscellaneous Road and Rail Observations

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THIS IS UNEVALUATED INFORMATION

1. A new motor road has been constructed between Sining and Ho-k'ou. This road runs along the north bank of the Sining River. A suspension bridge was built east of Sining, which allows the road to cross the river to the north bank and a second bridge was built across the Tatung River. At Ho-k'ou a third bridge crosses the Pingfan River and the road then proceeds to Lanchow. The motor road to Sinkiang Province branches off to the north just past the Pingfan River bridge and runs along the east side of the river. In July 1953 Sinkiang Province was a closed military zone. Special permission had to be obtained to travel in and out of the province and no letter could be mailed without first presenting it for censorship.
2. The Lanchow-Sinkiang Railroad passes through the southern portion of the city of Lanchow and then runs along the southern banks of the Hwang Ho (Yellow River) to a point just west of where the Pingfan River flows into the Hwang Ho. There, the rail track crosses the Hwang Ho on a wooden bed supported by seven or eight sets of tripods which sit on oval-shaped concrete pillars. This railroad then continues in a northwesterly direction, along the west bank of the Pingfan River. In July 1953 rails had been laid to the small village of Lung K'ou P'u, where the ascent to Wu Chiao Ling divide begins, and work was being conducted on a tunnel through Wu Chiao Ling. At Wu Chiao Ling divide the Chinese Communists maintained a meteorological station.
3. I had occasion to examine sections of rail track between Tienshui and Ho-k'ou and made the following observation. The rails west of Lanchow were new, probably of Chinese Communist manufacture, whereas, the rails east of Lanchow were of UK manufacture and bore the date 1905. [redacted] on the railroad between Lanchow and Tienshui, the trip took 18 hours. All of the US maps I have seen since indicate that the railroad passes through the town of Tienshui. Actually, the Tienshui railroad station is about 40 li north of the town.

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4. At Tienshui our train was delayed for three days because of a tunnel cave-in somewhere between Tienshui and Paoki. I counted over 100 tunnels between Tienshui and Paoki and at least a third of these were under repair at the time. Workers were removing the old brick lining within these tunnels and replacing the brick with 18" x 6" concrete blocks. The concrete blocks were being manufactured by a factory located along the railroad track at a point about midway between Tienshui and Paoki.

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